

6,468,637) of the present application, from which the present application is a divisional, has a U.S. filing date of April 20, 2000, well before the earliest priority date (October 23, 2000) of WO '542. In view of the priority in time of the present application over the cited application, WO '542, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the presently pending 102(e) rejection.

Since WO 02/34542 A1 has been shown not to be a reference under 102(e), neither can it be used as a reference under 103(a). Bryan et al. (US 6,215, 508) alone does not suggest the presently claimed invention. For this reason, applicants assert that the 102(a) rejection should be withdrawn and request withdrawal of the present pending 103(a) rejection.

Applicants assert that the presently claimed invention should be allowed.

A prompt and positive response is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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